

HURRICANE RITA

**USFWS Southwest Region Incident
Command Type-3 Team Response
September 23 – October 2, 2005**



The Mission

- Assist with accounting for all FWS personnel in affected area
- Community assistance
 - Protect human life and safety
 - Provide for the delivery of emergency services to public (access)
- Activities that allow/assist FWS stations to get back on line (stabilize facilities to prevent further deterioration)
- General cleanup of FWS stations

September 23, 2005

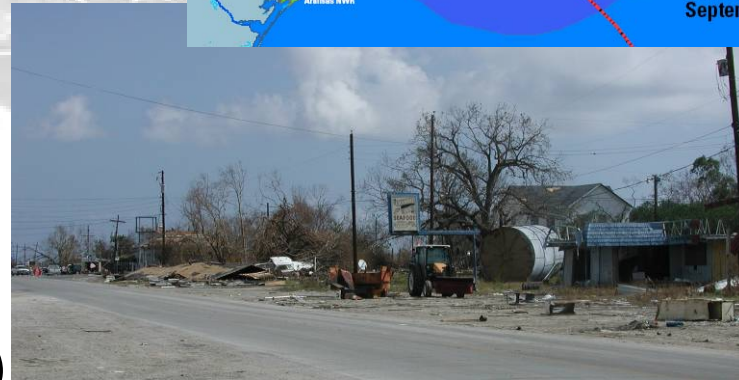
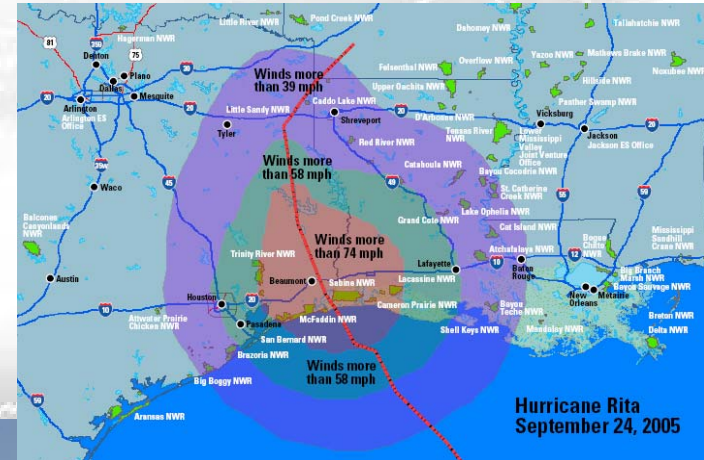
- Hurricane Rita approaches landfall as a class 4 storm
- Type 3 Incident Command Team stages at Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge
 - Heavy equipment and sawyers
 - SORT for law enforcement support
 - Support team including buying team; safety, medical, & public information officers; planners; etc.



Balcones Canyonlands NWR (USFWS)

September 24, 2005

- Hurricane Rita makes landfall at 2:00 a.m.
- ICT dispatches advance team for reconnaissance in affected area
 - Community liaison officer
 - SORT (in 3 divisions)
- ICT readies for departure



Sabine Pass, TX (USFWS)



Hwy 180, Sabine Pass Road (USFWS)

September 25, 2005



ICT convoy to Chambers County, TX (USFWS)



Ashley Samberson, Brent Woffinden, Kristen Maxfield and Ryan Vice (Aransas NWR) clear emergency access route in middle Chambers County, TX (USFWS)

- ICT convoys to Anahuac, TX
- SORT officers begin patrolling with Chambers County Sheriffs Department
- Advance team clears emergency access through middle Chambers County including Town of Anahuac (58 miles)

September 26, 2005



Opening Hwy 87 to emergency access, Sabine Pass, TX (USFWS)

- Contact with Tex DOT and cleared access on Hwy 87 Sabine Pass to McFaddin NWR (14 miles)
- ICP set up at precinct court in Baytown, TX



Moving water into ICP at Baytown, TX (USFWS)

September 26, 2005 (cont.)

- SORT members deputized in Chambers County
- Initiated security at shelter in Winnie, TX
- Began security at food distribution centers and stores, night patrols to prevent looting



Evacuation shelter at Winnie, TX



FWS agent Charles Rhodes (Texas Midcoast Refuges Complex) provides security at Winnie, TX distribution center



Food, water and ice distribution lines in Anahuac, TX

September 26, 2005 (cont.)



Damage to McFaddin NWR shop (lost last 20 feet)

- Initial refuge damage assessment continues
- Began securing damaged buildings at McFaddin, Anahuac and Trinity River NWR
- Began clearing county road access into Trinity River NWR tracts



Trinity River NWR office water damage



Trinity River NWR office roof secured with plastic

September 27, 2005

- Completed clearing of county road access to Trinity River NWR (3 miles)
- Began restoring emergency access to Port Arthur, TX
- Continued to secure refuge damage from further deterioration



Restoring county road access to Trinity River NWR (USFWS)



Restoring emergency vehicle access to urban streets in Port Arthur, TX (USFWS)



Ashley Samberson and Kristen Maxfield (Aransas NWR) cut and clear debris from roadways in Port Arthur, TX (USFWS)

September 28, 2005

- Port Arthur, TX road clearing continues (18 miles and 181 driveways)
- Blind man taken to evacuation shelter
- Assessed generator, electric disconnect, fan and AC needs to dry water damage at refuge buildings, other damage assessments continue
- Reported natural gas leak in Port Arthur, TX
- Fed & watered abandoned dogs
- Infusion of LE support from FWS R6 arrives



Removing water-damaged carpet from McFaddin NWR Fire Office (USFWS)



Secured damaged roof and window at hunt check station, Anahuac NWR (USFWS)



Feeding abandoned dogs in Port Arthur, TX (roaming dogs became aggressive in latter days of Port Arthur clean up)

September 29, 2005

- Emergency access work at Port Arthur, TX completed (1.5 road miles, 69 driveways, 27 hazard trees removed)
- First of generators installed to start drying McFaddin NWR buildings
- Anahuac NWR
 - 3 miles fence repaired to exclude cattle
 - Began reopening trails/roads
 - Shop door damaged assessed and secured



Generators installed to commence drying buildings at McFaddin NWR (USFWS)



Boat barn doors damaged and removed at Anahuac NWR (USFWS)



Clearing trail access and repairing fence lines to exclude cattle at Anahuac NWR (USFWS)

September 30, 2005

- Temporary housing (15 trailers) set up for displaced refuge employees – including 5 families
- McFaddin NWR
 - Repairs and drying continue
 - Generator power points/disconnects installed
- Trinity River NWR handicapped hunter trails opened (3½ miles)
- Federal LE officers deputized in Jefferson County (historic first)



Temporary housing set up for refuge employees at Baytown, TX (USFWS)



Power points/disconnects installed at McFaddin NWR (USFWS)



Rafters repaired on McFaddin NWR lean-to storage shed (USFWS)



Rod Lopez (Buenos Aires NWR) clears handicapped hunter access at Trinity River NWR (USFWS)

October 1, 2005



Anahuac NWR road flooding and damage (USFWS)



Marsh debris washed onto Roberts-Mueller Tract Road, Anahuac NWR (USFWS)



Storm-surge erosion undermined slab at Galveston Bay overlook, Anahuac NWR – stabilized with materials on site (USFWS)

- Cleared debris and graded storm damaged roads at Anahuac NWR (5 miles)
- Storm-surge erosion of East Bay overlook stabilized
- Trinity River NWR trail clearing continues (additional 3.2 miles)
- LE completed check of all refuge employee houses
- LE continues to assist Jefferson County sheriff & assisted at High Island beach check point

October 2, 2005



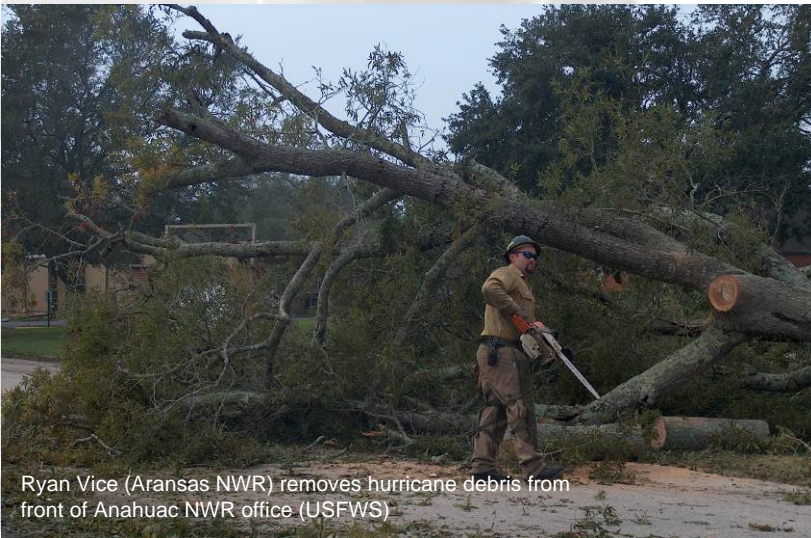
- Anahuac NWR
 - Remote electrical hook-up points completed
 - East Bay overlook up righted and stabilized
 - All remaining roads cleared of debris (5 miles)
- Additional right-of-way at Trinity River NWR opened (3 miles)
- ICT transitioned and demobilized – contingent of 7 maintenance and 11 law enforcement staff remain

Summary

- Community emergency access restored
 - 107 miles of road
 - 260 driveways cleared
 - 27 hazard trees removed
- Refuge access and stabilization
 - 26.2 miles of road cleared/repared
 - 3 miles fence restored
 - 2 acres hazard trees felled
 - All buildings on 4 NWRs secured (tarpred, dried, partially demolished, generator power as appropriate, etc) to prevent further damage
 - All FWS employee housing assessed
 - Temporary housing provided for FWS employees and families
- No reportable accidents

Law Enforcement

- Provide security at ICP, hotel and ICT work detachments
- Assigned to the Chambers County and eventually Jefferson County sheriff's offices for special details and to augment patrols throughout county
- Patrolled refuges.
- Averaged 150+ calls for service per day
- Contacts included;
 - 2 emotional disturbed persons.
 - 1 suicide attempt.
 - Numerous motorist assists (flat tires, etc.)
 - Looting prevention.
 - High visibility patrols at shelters, food distribution points and stores.
 - Undercover work with price gouging at stores.
 - Numerous burglary alarm responses.
 - 2 traffic accidents (COW vs TRUCK, HORSE vs TRUCK).
 - Interdiction of a fistfight at the FWS employee hotel.
- SORT provided vehicles to the Sheriff's department as their patrol vehicles started breaking down, provided 9 patrol officers for the 26 Chambers County deputy force (1/3 of total county LE personnel)



Ryan Vice (Aransas NWR) removes hurricane debris from front of Anahuac NWR office (USFWS)